

RECOGNIZING JUDGE RICHARD
LEE McMECHAN

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 1, 2001

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Richard Lee McMechan, retiring Superior Court Judge of Mariposa County.

Judge McMechan began his education at Fullerton Junior College, and soon after, earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Police Science from California State University of Long Beach in 1960. He proceeded to earn his law degree from Western State University College of Law in Anaheim in Orange County. During and after law school he served as a detective and traffic officer in Garden Grove from 1958–62. From 1962–72 he served as a Claims Manager/Supervisor at Kemper Insurance Company in Santa Ana. Judge McMechan also proudly served his country from Private to Sergeant in the U.S. Army and U.S. Army Reserve from 1956–62.

Judge McMechan was admitted to the California Bar Association on January 5, 1972. From 1972 to 1974 he handled insurance defense for Hunt, Liljestrom & Wentworth. Between 1974 and 1982 he was a sole practitioner for San Juan Capistrano and Santa Ana, in California. McMechan also served as the Deputy District Attorney, part time, in Mariposa County from 1979–82. He served as Judge of the Sierra Judicial District Justice Court in Madera County from July 13, 1982 to November 16, 1987. On October 29, 1987 Judge McMechan was appointed to the position of Superior Court Judge and was officially elected Superior Court Judge on June 7, 1988.

Judge McMechan was born October 15, 1937 in Brea, California. He married Carol A. Wojciechowski on May 12, 1962. The couple have four successful children: Diedre, Kirsten, Darin and Bryan.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Judge Richard Lee McMechan for his tremendous contributions to his community. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing Judge Richard Lee McMechan many more years of continued success.

TRIBUTE TO THE HARVARD
LIVING WAGE CAMPAIGN

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 1, 2001

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend to my colleagues a beautifully written article by Benjamin L. McKean recounting the success earlier this year of the Harvard Living Wage Campaign.

Mr. McKean is a remarkable young activist who joined with many of his classmates in support of the campaign of low-wage workers at Harvard University to improve their wages, benefits, and working conditions. At a university which prides itself on training future leaders for the world at large, Mr. McKean and his young classmates decided to exercise leadership right at home on behalf of the less privileged in the Harvard community.

I submit Mr. McKean's article for insertion into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

[From the Crimson, May 9, 2001]

THE BEGINNING OF THE END

(By Benjamin L. McKean)

We have organized and won something tremendous in Harvard Yard these past three weeks. Since I entered Massachusetts Hall on April 18, workers at Harvard have seen countless victories. As part of the sit-in settlement, our janitors will begin negotiating a new contract more than a year early and any future pay increases will be retroactive to last week. The University committed to a good contract for our dining hall workers. The administration completely backed off from its threat to reclassify more than 100 of our dining hall workers at the Business School. They agreed to increase access to its English as a Second Language program and to immediately consider health care premiums for low-wage workers. Harvard agreed to a moratorium on outsourcing directly hired employees to subcontractors—and outsourcing has been the primary way the University has slashed wages and benefits for years. Alumni have donated more than \$10,000 to the Harvard Workers Center, which provides free legal aid and support to Harvard's poverty wage employees. And the University agreed to a committee to discuss the living wage with student and worker representation. Whatever concerns I have about this committee, it makes a big difference knowing that some of the people on the receiving end of Harvard's poverty wages will be there to tell the other members of the committee exactly what that's like.

Perhaps most importantly, it is no longer possible for power to operate at Harvard without acknowledging the principle that people deserve a living wage. Our community has a responsibility to treat all its members decently, and we have told the people who thought they led our community that they must do that. Everyone in the Harvard Living Wage Campaign—workers, students, faculty, alumni, area residents—said no to indecent treatment, and to poverty wages. We said stop. All of us.

The past 21 days are not significant just because dozens of people occupied the President's office. The past 21 days are significant because of what happened outside of this building. Dining hall workers electrified Harvard Yard; worker-student solidarity is so strong that they want to have one of us help bargain their new contract. Faculty came together; about 400 of Harvard's famously individualistic professors together signed a letter calling for a living wage, and supporting the sit-in. Undergraduates turned out in record numbers for the largest rallies that the Yard has seen in decades, and students from every single graduate or professional school organized themselves in support in a completely unheralded way. Thousands of alumni called University President Neil L. Rudenstine, and even temporarily occupied the Harvard Club of New York. And our janitors and custodians organized rallies, trained themselves in civil disobedience and demanded decent treatment. And we all did it together. And so in the last 21 days we have won two victories; one in the form of substantive gains for Harvard workers, and the second a promise made today by this community—a promise to continue to fight for a living wage.

But our extraordinarily modest and simple demand for \$10.25 an hour makes a world of difference. On this campus, in this country, people have long fought for the principle that people should be treated without regard to race or to gender or to sexuality. That's because respecting the dignity of all people

is the fundamental principle of any community, especially of an educational community. We think an education is valuable because we think people are valuable enough to educate. And for the past 21 days, this whole community came together to say that every one of us is valuable. Every one of us deserves a living wage. And all of us together, in solidarity as never before, told the people who said no that they must say yes.

We—all of us—have made this a time when power stopped. For 21 days, we occupied the offices of the people who thought they could block the consensus of our entire community. We asked power to justify its operation, and power found that it couldn't. For 21 days, the people who thought they could run this place without regard for students, for workers, for faculty, for alumni and for the Cambridge-area community—those people did not have a clue what to do. For 21 days it was not business as usual in the halls of power. We should have no illusions: this sit-in was all about coercion. We all decided that we would not go along with the Corporation's coercive power any more, that we would not let them force indecent poverty wages on members of our community.

While this tremendous victory marks the end of one phase of our campaign for a living wage, we do not expect the Corporation's coercive power to disappear, and we do not expect this fight to end. We do not need to harbor a utopian fantasy in order to recognize that Harvard's administrators can and must treat people better and pay them better. So today's victory cannot be anything but partial.

Recognizing that, all of us should look ahead together to the day when we have won a living wage for all Harvard workers, and to the fights beyond that. Together, we can change not just the dialogue, but the reality of the conditions of Harvard's workers. We can turn the coercive power of the Corporation with the force of our collective yes. Together, in solidarity, we can make Harvard's power productive, make it a positive force and take it for workers. We have organized and won something tremendous here in Harvard Yard, because we have organized and won each other. And to keep winning—to win a living wage for all Harvard employees—we've got to keep organizing. Workers, students, faculty, alumni, parents, all community members energized from this victory should together build from here until everyone joins us in saying: Living wage now!

TRIBUTE TO THE MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT COMMUNITY FOR EFFORTS IN FUNDRAISING TO BENEFIT THE HEROES AND VICTIMS OF SEPTEMBER 11

HON. MARK FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 1, 2001

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well of the House to congratulate the many people whose hard work and sacrifice resulted in a series of successful concerts to benefit the heroes and victims of the September 11th tragedies.

Last month, the music and entertainment worlds joined forces to raise funds to help those affected by the September 11th tragic events. On October 20th, Madison Square Garden hosted "The Concert for New York City." On October 21st, a second all-star benefit concert, "United We Stand," was held